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ABSTRACT

News writing students at two universities were surveyed concerning their perceptions of freshman composition and its usefulness for other academic writing, journalistic writing, and the work world. The survey was also designed to determine whether students believed freshman composition and journalism emphasized the same writing skills and whether variables other than freshman composition grade were better predictors of a students' success in introductory news writing. Subjects, 77 students who had just completed the first freshman composition course and the first journalism writing course at South Dakota State University and Southwest Missouri State University, responded to a 17-item survey concerning the two courses. Results indicated that: (1) journalism students perceived that freshman composition did not provide a good foundation for them in other courses and in the work world; (2) freshman composition and journalism emphasize different writing skills; and (3) English American College Testing (ACT) score, composite ACT score, and gender were better predictors of student's success in introductory journalism classes. Findings suggest that freshman composition was not seen as a good preparation for journalism students. (Eleven tables of data are included; 31 references are attached.) (RS)

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Journalism Students' Perception of English Composition as a Preparation for News Writing

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Running Head: JOURNALISM STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS

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Abstract

The authors surveyed news writing students at two universities concerning their perceptions of freshman composition and its usefulness for other academic writing, journalistic writing, and the work world; whether freshman composition and journalism emphasize the same writing skills; and whether variables other than freshman composition grade were better predictors of a student's success in introductory news writing. They concluded that freshman composition emphasizes different writing skills and is not particularly beneficial for journalism students.

Journalism Students' Perception of English Composition as a Preparation for News Writing

Writing courses, typically labeled freshman or English composition, are among the general education requirements at virtually all colleges and universities in the United States. In addition, journalism departments and schools require additional writing courses (i.e., media writing, news writing, magazine writing, radio news reporting, etc.).

The literature reveals a massive amount of research in English composition on a wide variety of topics, and a much smaller but increasing amount of research on journalistic writing in such journals as Journalism Educator and at AEJMC conventions.

Little research, however, has examined the interplay between the writing instruction journalism students receive in English composition and the writing instruction they receive in journalism writing classes. An upcoming issue of Journalism Educator will contain an article on Olson's research on the effects of news writing instruction in English composition on the writing performance and attitudes of students. Olson examined the notion that news writing instruction is an effective method of teaching writing that might combat some of the weaknesses of traditional composition instruction.

Few others, however, have examined this issue, and there are key unanswered questions: Is freshman composition beneficial to journalism students? Are there aspects of journalistic writing instruction that would enhance freshman composition instruction

and vice versa? Is it necessary that journalism students take two composition courses, or one, or any at all?

The field of composition itself also has some unexamined issues. At English conferences one of the co-authors of this paper has attended, participants pointed out that English composition is in some ways an unexamined "sacred cow" within the university system. Traditionally, few have dared to question the role, value, purpose and reason for being of English composition and to suggest changes because there is unanimous agreement that students need writing instruction.

Yet, there's some uneasiness among English educators that should likewise leave journalism educators unsettled. At a conference on "Cognitive Strategies and Writing: A Dialogue Across Disciplines" sponsored by the University of Chicago in 1986, English professors argued that what is taught in freshman composition is not necessarily applicable to all fields and disciplines and that this limitation has often not been clearly explained to students and faculty in disciplines outside English. Writing across the curriculum programs that have been developed at colleges and universities across the nation have taken a big step toward addressing this problem. Others contended that no business or work situation uses the kind of writing taught in English composition.

Still others pointed out that freshman composition is essentially "contentless" and "disciplineless" (although it doesn't need to be and some composition instructors

create useful content). Because of the background of most freshman composition instructors, the "content" often becomes literature and/or anthologies of professional essays. But this can be problematic also. Gold (1991) argued, "The intellectual demands of the professional essay in the composition course divert attention from teaching fundamental writing proficiency" (p. 261).

The perception also exists that writing instruction in English classes over the years has rewarded creativity and ignored grammatical and stylistic correctness. Stone (1990) noted that the problem of "deficiencies in knowledge and skills considered minimal for success in institutions of higher education" was one of the major changes in the past generation that make teaching news writing more difficult (p. 4). He noted that scores on the nation's standardized college entrance tests, including verbal scores that reflect writing ability, are an all-time low. Stone noted a study by Williams (1983) that news writing is the most difficult journalism class to teach, faculty say, because of students' lack of English (grammar) skills. (Stone, p. 9).

The reason grammar may not be stressed in English composition is that composition theorists question the value of teaching grammar. In his review of the existing research in the field, Hartwell (1985) noted that research on the subject beginning in 1906 has found that study of grammar does not relate to an ability to think logically or the ability to recognize error.

DeBoer (1959) reviewed the previous research and concluded that "the results have been consistently negative so far as the value of grammar in the improvement of language expression is concerned." Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, Schoer stated in 1963 what many English composition educators still believe today:

> In view of the widespread agreement of research studies based upon many types of students and teachers, the conclusion can be stated in strong and unqualified terms: the teaching of formal grammar has a negligible or, because it usually displaces some instruction and practice in composition, even a harmful effect on improvement in writing.

Research by Strom (1960), Meckel (1963) and Sherwin (1969) and others concluded the same thing.

Researchers have found that the caveat against teaching grammar not only applies to the college level, but to high school as well. Bamberg (1978, 1981) concluded that the amount of time spend in high school grammar instruction was the least important of eight factors examined in differentiating regular and remedial writers at college.

Though the research on other areas of composition is too extensive and varied to be discussed here in any depth, some aspects of the research seem pertinent. Hillocks (1986) notes that little research has been done looking at subprocesses, such as prewriting and revision, how writers' knowledge of the subject affects process, and how writers' awareness of the desires of the

audience affects their writing. Composition researchers may be starting to think the unthinkable as far as grammar is concerned, as well. Hillocks suggests that "perhaps some minimal grammatical knowledge is necessary to achieve a satisfactory level of accuracy in adhering to the conventions of punctuation" (pp. 234-35).

If existing composition research on the inutility of teaching grammar has been put into practice by composition teachers at the high school and college levels, composition writing instruction could leave students with the belief that grammar is not necessary or even important. It also could result in students being deficient in grammar and in other practical skills needed by journalists and others in writing professions.

The type of teaching being used in many composition programs, such at Southwest Missouri State University, is "process writing." While most journalism educators probably would say that they have always taught writing as a process, some experimentation with process writing patterned after English composition has been undertaken (Hresan, 1992; Pitts, 1981; Zurek, 1986). Pitts (1989) provides an overview of some of the key process literature, as does Olson (1987), who cautions against blindly following the path set by composition theorists.

Anecdotal information suggests that the trend is away from creativity at the expense of grammatical correctness to a more balanced teaching approach, but research needs to be done in that area to determine if that is the case.

Given the reservations among administrators and professors

from the department that teaches composition, it is surprising that journalism educators are not discussing more vigorously the issue of whether or not composition instruction is a valuable part of their curriculum.

Some journalism programs, like the ones at South Dakota State University and Southwest Missouri State University, require that all students take two semester of English composition. (At South Dakota State, the courses are freshman composition and junior composition, while at Southwest Missouri State they are both freshman courses). Other journalism programs may require only one semester of English composition (or successful completion of a competency test) along with additional writing courses required for journalism majors.

English literature and writing courses are now considered liberal arts courses by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, so journalism schools aren't as concerned as they once were about the number of English credits journalism students are required to complete. However, all curriculums are tight, and research into the value of freshman composition may allow journalism schools to lobby university administrators for journalism writing classes to be accepted in place of English composition, opening up more room in the curriculum. It also could lead to the improvement of grammar and writing skills of journalism graduates.

Literature Review

The literature reveals that there are reasons for examining

how beneficial English composition instruction is to journalism students and for promoting journalism writing courses as viable alternatives to composition classes.

In his search for a model of excellence for newspaper writing courses, Stone (1990) made an assumption, which he called "a matter of faith with no real empirical evidence," that a relationship exists between the content of the first news writing class and journalism students' writing ability" (p. 9).

Dvorak (1990) has conducted the most significant research to date on the value of journalistic writing instruction via an American College Testing (ACT) Program language arts survey administered to college students.

Dvorak found that when compared with students who did not take a journalism course, those students who did take at least one high school journalism course selected journalism courses as having fulfilled general language arts competencies better than either standard English or elective courses. More specifically, students who had taken journalism courses felt those courses better fulfilled the following four competencies than did standard English or other elective courses: writing, editing, gathering/use of sources, and affective domain (p. 45).

As they have done for decades, college professors, employers, etc. continue to complain about students' weak writing skills. Students' writing skills may be weak (i.e., unclear, confusing, wordy) simply because they have not been taught how to write clearly and/or they have not received enough reinforcement in

other classes. Williams (1985), a widely respected English professor at the University of Chicago, said, "the most common reason for bad writing is, I think, the simplest: Most writers have just never learned how to write clearly and directly in the first place" (p. 5).

Shaughnessy (1977), who did landmark research on remedial writers, said that "much of the writing English teachers promote, consciously or unconsciously, is not simple" because English teachers' judgments, instead, are generally "shaped by years of exposure to belletristic literature" (p. 196). Fortunately this situation has improved considerably, however, because graduate programs in English now offer courses in composition and rhetoric.

After having worked with approximately 250 writers in workshops for three large corporations and as a writing consultant to a large county government, Tebeaux (1988) said she observed a number of employee writing problems that were tracable to strategies learned in freshman composition. In her article, which was chosen article of the year by the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing, Tebeaux pointed out that "freshman composition as it is usually taught does not provide adequate preparation for writing at work" (p. 14). Ideally, freshman composition should at least prepare students to write in college, but little research has examined how well it succeeds at that task.

Ryan and Findley (1982) looked at the effect of freshman composition and grammar instruction in high school English on students' Diagnostic English Test (DET) scores. They found that

the mean score for students who had taken two required composition and rhetoric courses at West Virginia University was not significantly better than those who had completed the first course and that both means were far below what was required for admission into the school of journalism. They also found that the later in high school the student had grammar instruction, the better the student did on the DET.

The authors concluded that many students study English early in their high school years and receive little subsequent instruction and that English composition courses at West Virginia Univesity did not teach students "the skills they need to become adequate--much less good --writers. . ." (p. 18). They determined that English was failing in teaching students how to use the English language.

In the second edition of Basic News Writing, Mencher (1983) said that good journalistic writing is clear and simple; however, "[d]espite the clarity of such writing, teachers of high school and college English resist this kind of writing. Worse, they condemn it" (p. 280).

Mencher cited a study in which Hake and Williams (1981) discovered that English teachers consistently preferred muddy prose to clear writing and found more errors in clearly written essays than in complicated essays even though the essays were exactly the same except for style.

Jones (1982) found similar results. When asked to choose the best journalistic stories, graders with an English background

typically chose the longest and wordiest stories. Jones later wrote that there are two distinct breeds of writing teachers_those who teach journalism and those who teach English. He concluded that "[i]t's time to stop questioning the effectiveness of journalistic writing instruction. It's time to start shouting that what we do works" (1986, p. 29).

Koziol (1981) studied high school students who took journalism and found that the clear advantage of journalism over English was that the journalistic writing techniques students used provided an approach to writing that was clear, precise, and understandable, while at the same time enjoyable.

Pauly (1983) wrote in a business journal that "courses in journalism and business writing offer a more effective and efficient way to teaching undergraduate students to write than courses in freshman composition do" (p. 6). He concluded, "Journalism and business writing courses cut through all the romantic bugaboo about creativity and convince students that anyone with courage, patience, and determination can learn to write" (p. 8).

Although certainly not all English teachers promote unclear and wordy writing, the literature suggests that many do. And, because they do, composition instruction is weakened, may contribute to students' poor writing skills, and may not benefit journalism students.

The fact that English composition instruction typically occurs in a vacuum without a realistic audience is another

weakness. With journalistic writing, however, it is easier for teachers to create realistic audiences for student writing via publication and for students to see the value of their writing.

As noted earlier, English composition is basically contentless and students typically write without a body of knowledge. Instead in some composition classes students write expressively or creatively, often about personal experiences. Rose (1983) said, "Few academic assignments (outside of composition) require a student to produce material ex nihilo" (p. 119).

Journalism writing instruction can combat all three of these problems that plague English composition instruction: students are more likely to learn a clearer and more concise writing style, more likely to write to an expanded and realistic audience, and more likely to write either out of a body of knowledge or on topics in which they obtain content through interviews, fact sheets, and so forth.

Last, students often dislike English classes because they fail to see practical application to the "real" world for the writing instruction they receive. Harwood's study (1982) of 500 alumni of a small, state-supported institution found that the typical graduate did little of the creative or reflective writing commonly taught in English courses. Olson's research referred to earlier found that students who received news writing instruction in English composition viewed that instruction as being more practical for work world writing than students who received traditional composition instruction.

That writing and grammar skills are important in the professional world is indicated by a recent study by the American Society of Newspaper Editors (1990). Editors ranked writing skills as the most important skill for new hires, followed closely by spelling and grammar skills (p. 6). On the other hand, only 9 percent of editors rated applicants who were journalism school graduates and 2 percent of applicants who were non-journalism school graduates as strong in spelling and grammar. Only 17 percent of editors rated journalism school graduates as strong in writing ability, and only 7 percent of editors rated applicant who were non-journalism school graduates as strong in writing (p. 7). Thus while J-school graduates were rated higher than other graduates, but they were not rated very high on the skills most important to editors.

Are required English composition classes valuable to journalism students in school and in the work world? The literature reveals enough concerns about composition writing instruction that this question is worth examining.

Hypotheses:

Four research questions were formulated as the basis of the research: (1) Do journalism students perceive that freshman composition provides a good foundation for them in other courses and in the work world? (2) Do freshman composition and journalism emphasize the same writing skills? (3) What factors best predict a student's success in introductory journalism classes? And (4) Is there a difference in journalism students' perceptions based

upon educational institutional?

Because research suggests that English composition courses may not prepare students well for writing tasks in other courses and in the professions, the first hypothesis was proposed:

> Journalism students will report that freshman composition is not useful overall, for the work world, for other academic writing, or for journalistic writing.

Because it was suspected that freshman composition does not stress the importance of practical skills such as grammar and spelling and instead tends to emphasize reflective skills such as creativity and presenting one's own opinions, the second hypothesis was proposed:

> Journalism students will report that the introductory journalism writing course teaches practical skills and that freshman composition teaches reflective skills.

For this study practical skills were defined as writing concisely, precisely, clearly, with good organization, using good grammar, using proper spelling, and writing for one's audience. Reflective skills were defined as writing interestingly, creatively, in detail, and using one's own opinions.

The authors were interested in finding predictors for success in introductory journalism and composition. The major independent variables investigated were sex, whether the student was a print journalism major, English ACT score, and composite ACT score. The authors also wished to see whether a student's prior exposure

to grammar and spelling instruction would be a factor in a student's success in composition and journalism. Because it wasn't known which would be the best predictors of student success, the third hypothesis was proposed:

> Freshman composition grades will be a better predictor of success in the introductory journalism course than sex, major, English ACT score, composite ACT score, freshman composition grade, and extent of previous grammar and spelling instruction.

Previous grammar and spelling instruction was defined as the grammar instruction the student received in freshman composition and in high school English and how strict the student perceived the freshman composition instructor was in grading for grammar and spelling mistakes.

The authors expected that students' perceptions of course content would differ somewhat at the two institutions studied. The authors expected that the content of the composition course might vary and that journalism students surveyed would be somewhat different at the two institutions because South Dakota State is ACEJMC accredited while Southwest Missouri State is not accredited and offers only a journalism minor. Thus, the fourth hypothesis was proposed:

> Differences in how students perceive freshman composition and journalistic writing will be found based upon educational institution.

Procedures

Seventy-seven students who had completed the first freshman composition course and the first journalism writing course at South Dakota State University and Southwest Missouri State University were asked to answer a 17-question survey concerning the two courses.

Students were surveyed in January 1992. At South Dakota State, where all journalism students enrolled in advertising, broadcast, news-editorial, and agricultural journalism sequences must take the introductory news writing class, 32 students who had taken that course in the fall of 1991 were surveyed. At Southwest Missouri State, where the introductory news writing course is a requirement for writing majors and for journalism minors, 45 students taking the second news writing course were surveyed.

Students answered questions using a 1-to-5 scale. For all but two questions, the scale was 1 = none at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a moderate amount; 4 = quite a bit; and 5 = very much. For analysis, responses 1, 2, and 3 were combined and categorized as low, while 4 and 5 were combined and categorized as high.

Independent variables used in the analysis were letter grade in the first freshman composition course and in the first journalism writing course, English and composite ACT score, major, sex, and institution being attended. Because of the small sample, students were classified as print journalism majors or non-print majors, letter grades were classified as "A" or "non-A," and ACT scores were categorized as high (23 or above) or low (22 and below).

Results

Respondents. Students surveyed at the two universities differed somewhat. Twenty of the 45 SMSU respondents (55.6 percent) were male, while at SDSU 20 of the 32 students (62.5 percent) were male. At SMSU only three students (6.7 percent) labeled themselves at print journalism majors (though they could not obtain the degree there), while at SDSU seven students (21.9 percent) called themselves print journalism majors.

Value of Freshman Comp. Students were asked how valuable the writing instruction they received in their first freshman English composition course was. A minority of the journalism students (45.5 percent) rated the value of their freshman writing instruction as having quite a bit or very much value, 35.1 percent rated its value as moderate, and 19.4 percent rated it has having little value or none at all.

As Table 1 shows, very little difference existed between the percent of SMSU and SDSU journalism students stating that composition's value was high. Only one statistically significant

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Insert Table 1 about here

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relationship was found for the independent variables at the .05 level of confidence based upon responses to the question about the value of freshman composition. South Dakota State journalism students who received an A in the introduction journalism writing class were significantly more likely to rate the value of freshman comp as high than those not receiving an A.

A majority (55.9 percent) of students surveyed who had received an A in freshman composition responded that freshman composition's value was high, while only a minority (37.2 percent) of students who did not receive an A rated the value as high.

Print journalism majors were more likely than non-print majors to see freshman composition writing instruction's value as high. About the same percent of students of both sexes overall rated the value of freshman composition writing instruction as high; however, a difference was found based upon institution. Females at SMSU and males at SDSU were more likely to rate the value of freshman composition as high.

More students with low English ACT scores (48.6 percent) than students with high English ACT scores (40.6 percent) rated the value of freshman comp writing instruction as high. A difference was found at the two institutions, however. At SMSU more students with low English ACT scores rated the value of that instruction as high, while at SDSU more students with high ACT scores rated it as high.

More students with high composite ACT scores than those with low scores (50.0 percent v. 41.9 percent) rated the value of freshman comp writing as high. More students with an A in the introductory journalism course than with a lower grade rated freshman comp's value as high (48.1 percent v. 44.7 percent), though students at the two institutions differed. More SMSU journalism students with a grade other than an A rated freshman comp's value as high, while the reverse was true at SDSU. The

difference between A and non-A students at SDSU was statistically significant.

Utility of Freshman Comp in Work World. Only 29.9 percent of journalism students ranked the usefulness of freshman composition in the work world as high ("quite a bit" or "very much" useful), while 37.7 percent rated the usefulness as moderate, and 32.4 percent rated it a little useful or none or all. As Table 2 shows, SMSU students were more likely to see it as useful than were SDSU students. None of the responses based upon the independent variables was statistically significant, however.

Insert Table 2 about here

SMSU students with an A in freshman composition were less likely than those with a lower grade to think that the utility of the course was high, while the reverse was true at SDSU. Print majors were somewhat less likely than students with other majors to think the course was useful. Female students at SDSU were slightly more likely than male students to think it was useful, but not at SMSU.

While SMSU students with low English ACT scores were more likely to see freshman composition writing as useful, South Dakota State students with a high ACT score were more likely to give that response. At both institutions, students with low composite ACT scores were as likely as those with high scores to think it was useful.

SMSU students with an A in the introductory journalism

writing class were less likely to think that freshman composition writing instruction's usefulness in the work world would be high, though South Dakota State students with an A in journalism were more likely to give that response.

Utility of Freshman Comp for Other Academic Writing. Less than half of the students in the two institutions (46.8 percent) responded that writing instruction in freshman composition had a high degree of usefulness for other academic writing ("quite a bit" and "very much" responses), while 29.8 percent stated that it had a moderate amount of usefulness, and 23.4 percent stated that it had "a little" usefulness or "none at all." As Table 3 shows, no difference was found between the number of students at the two institutions who rated the utility as high.

Insert Table 3 about here

Only one difference was statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence or above. South Dakota State students who received an A in freshman composition were more likely to think the writing instruction in the course was useful for other academic writing than were non-A students. SMSU A students, however, thought it was less useful than did non-A students.

A minority of print and non-print majors thought freshman composition useful in other academic writing. A majority of SMSU females found it useful, while the identical percent of SDSU males thought it was useful. A high English ACT score made almost no difference in students' responses to the question, but students

with high composite ACT scores were somewhat more likely to think it was useful than those with low scores. Students who did not receive an A in the introductory journalism writing class were more likely to see the composition course as useful, with the difference being more pronounced at SMSU.

Utility of Freshman Comp for Journalistic Writing. Only 23.4 percent of journalism students at the two institutions responded that the utility of the writing instruction they received in freshman composition to journalistic writing was high ("quite a bit" or "very much" useful), while 26.0 percent found it moderately useful, and 50.6 percent found it "a little" useful or none at all. As Table 4 shows, SMSU students were more likely to find the utility of freshman composition to be high, but the difference was not statistically significant.

Insert Table 4 about here

Only one difference based upon independent variables was statistically significant. SDSU students who had received an A in the introductory journalism writing course were significantly more likely to find it useful than were non-A students. SMSU A students were less likely to find it useful, however.

Print journalism majors were somewhat less likely than majors in other fields to find composition useful, but the reverse was true at SDSU. Males at both institutions were more likely to see it as useful than were females, but the difference in response based upon sex was much greater at SDSU than at SMSU.

SMSU students with English ACT scores of 22 or under were more likely to think composition was useful in journalistic writing, but the reverse was true at SDSU. SMSU students with composite ACT scores of 22 and under were more likely to think composition was useful in journalistic writing, but the opposite was true at SDSU. Students at SMSU who reeived lower than an A in journalism were more likely than A students to see composition writing as useful for the course as useful, but the reverse was the case at SDSU.

Comparing Variables to Success in Journalistic Writing. As Table 5 shows, SMSU students who did not receive an A in freshman composition were slightly more likely to have gotten an A in the introductory journalism writing course than to have gotten a lower grade, but SDSU students who received an A in composition were much more likely to have gotten an A in journalism than students who received a lower grade. Differences were not significant at

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Insert Table 5 about here

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the .05 level of confidence, however.

Print journalism majors were more likely to have received an A in the introductory journalistic writing course than were other majors, though the difference also was not statistically significant. Males were more likely to have received an A in journalism than were females. The difference was statistically significant overall and at South Dakota State.

Students with an English ACT score of 23 or more were more

likely to have gotten an A than those with a lower ACT score, and the difference was statistically significant overall and at South Dakota State. Students with a composite ACT score of 23 or more were more likely to have received an A in the introductory journalism writing course than those with a lower ACT score. The result was statistically significant overall and at both institutions.

Comparing Variables to Success in Composition. As Table 6 shows, print journalism majors were more likely to have received an A in composition, but the difference was not statistically significant. Females at SMSU were more likely to have received an A in composition than were males, but the reverse was true at SDSU.

Insert Table 6 about here

Students with English ACT scores of 23 or higher were more likely than those with a lower ACT score to have received an A in composition at both institutions, and the relationship was statistically significant overall. Students with a composite ACT of 23 or more also were more likely to have received an A in composition, and the results overall and at South Dakota State were statistically significant.

Students' Evaluation of Course Skills. After looking at stated objectives of the introductory composition and introductory journalism writing courses, the authors prepared a list of 11 skills that course syllabi indicated would be stressed in one or

both courses. Students were asked to evaluate both courses as to how well they taught the student each skill. The 11 skills then were ranked based upon means for SMSU and SDSU students. Pearson r correlations were calculated based upon means, and Spearman rho correlations were calculated based upon rankings.

As Table 7 shows, a low negative Pearson r correlation (-.266) was found for SMSU students' mean ratings indicating to what extent the 11 skills were taught in composition and in journalism, while a negligible positive correlation (.035) was found for SDSU students' mean ratings. The overall Pearson r correlation between

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Insert Table 7 about here

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composition and journalism means was negligible and negative (-.189). Thus students at both institutions tended to think that journalism and composition stressed different skills.

A statistically significant and substantial Pearson r correlation was found between SMSU's and SDSU's composition means (.668) and a significant and very dependable correlation was found for their journalism means (.955). Thus the students at both institutions were quite similar in their opinions as to how much the freshman composition course stressed the 11 skills and how much the introductory journalism course stressed the same skills.

The only two skills among the six that were rated the highest at SMSU for both composition and journalism were "organized" and "audience." Four concepts--"grammar," "spelling," "organized," and "audience"--were among the top six at South Dakota State for both

composition and journalism.

As Table 8 shows, the six skills with the greatest difference in means at SMSU were for "concisely," "precisely," "spelling," "clearly," "grammar" and "opinions." Journalism had the higher rating than did composition at SMSU for all skills except for "opinions" and "creatively." The six skills with the greatest

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Insert Table 8 about here

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difference in means at SDSU were "opinions," "concisely," "precisely," "audience," "clearly," and "creatively." At SDSU, journalism had the higher rating than composition for all but "interestingly," "creatively," "in detail," and "opinions." Overall, journalism had the higher mean for all the skills but "creativity" and "opinions."

Table 9 shows the difference between ratings of the skills for composition and ratings for journalism at the two institutions. The two composition courses were most similar for writing for the audience, writing concisely, using opinions,

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Insert Table 9 about here

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writing interestingly, and writing in an organized manner. They were most unalike for using correct grammar, writing creatively, using correct spelling, writing in detail, and writing precisely.

The journalism courses at SMSU and SDSU were most similar for use of grammar, writing for the audience, writing precisely,

writing clearly, and writing in detail. They were most unalike for writing creatively, writing concisely, using correct spelling, writing in an organized manner, and using one's opinions.

The most interesting finding on Table 9 is that the journalism courses at the two institutions were most alike for teaching grammar, while the composition courses were most unalike for the same concept. The skill taught most similarly in composition and in journalism was writing for the audience. The composition courses were most alike for that concept, and it ranked second for the journalism courses.

Other Findings. Table 10 lists the means and standard deviations for responses to the main questions on the survey.

Insert Table 10 about here

As the table shows, a minority of students at both institutions (17.8 percent v. 21.9 percent) stated that the amount of grammar instruction they received in freshman composition was high (Question 5), while a large majority of students at both institutions (64.4 percent v. 65.6 percent) stated that the amount of grammar instruction they received in high school was high (Question 6).

A minority of students at SMSU (46.7 percent) and at SDSU (46.9 percent) stated that the instructor for the freshman composition course was quite strict in grading for grammar mistakes (Question 7), while a majority of students at both institutions (62.2 percent v. 65.6 percent) stated that the

instructor was quite strict in grading for spelling mistakes (Question 8). Spelling, then, seems to be a worse error than grammar in freshman composition in both programs.

A majority of students at SMSU (62.2 percent) liked their composition course "quite a bit" or "very much," while a minority (46.9 percent) of the students at SDSU gave that response (Question 9). A majority of SMSU students (70.5 percent) but a minority of SDSU students (40.6 percent) enjoyed the writing portions of their introductory journalism class "quite a bit" or "very much" (Question 10).

A minority of students at both institutions (20.0 percent v. 31.3 percent) thought that not enough time was devoted to writing in freshman composition (Question 11). Students were somewhat less likely to state that the amount of time devoted to writing in the introductory journalism course was not sufficient (Question 12).

Correlations for Independent Variables. Pearson r correlations were compiled to determine how the composition grade, the English ACT and the composite ACT correlated with students' grade in freshman composition and the introductory journalism writing course. Overall the composite ACT was the best predictor of grade in journalism (.5053), followed by the English ACT (.4227), and then the composition grade (.2621). All three were statistically significant, with the two ACT scores being significant at the .01 level of confidence and the composition score being significant at the .05 level.

At SMSU only the composite ACT score (.4251, at .01 level)

and the English ACT score (.3441, at .05 level) had a statistically significant correlation with the journalism grade. The correlation for the composition grade was negligible (.0460). AT SDSU, all three correlations were significant. The highest correlation was for the composite ACT (.5925, significant at .01), followed by the English ACT (.5324, at .01), and the composition grade (.3771, at .05).

Pearson r correlations were calculated to determine whether type and amount of grammar instruction correlated with journalism and composition grades. No statistically significant correlation was found between grade in freshman composition or grade in journalism and the amount of grammar instruction received in high school, how strict the instructor in the first freshman composition course was in grading for grammar mistakes, or how strict the instructor was in grading for spelling mistakes.

At SMSU (.3278, .05 level of confidence) and overall (.3256, .01 level), but not as SDSU, a statistically significant correlation was found between the amount of grammar instruction students said they received in freshman composition and the journalism grade they received--but not between the amount of grammar instruction and their composition grade. Surprisingly, the correlation between amount of grammar instruction and the journalism grade was negative. The more grammar instruction students said they received in freshman composition, the lower their grade in journalism. That relationship was moderately strong at SDSU (.2949), though it was not statistically

significant.

Comparing V Scores for Variables. In examining the results, the authors expected that the lack of statistically significant results from the chi square tests was due in large part to the small sample size. Therefore, scores based upon a normed measure of association, Cramer's V, were analyzed. A V score of .100 was chosen as the dividing point between "high" and "low" scores for the sample because about half of the scores were above and below .100.

The authors analyzed the Cramer's V scores for the four key questions that comprised the first hypothesis (questions 1 to 4 on Table 10) and for the student's composition and journalism grades. The matrix in Table 11 shows the V scores for each of those six dependent variables as correlated with the six main independent variables. The high V scores (over .100) were defined as the best predictors.

Insert Table 11 about here

Composition grade was not a particularly good predictor at SMSU. The Cramer's V the journalism grade (.220) was the highest score for Question 1 (How valuable was the writing instruction received in freshman composition?), followed by English ACT score (.191), composition grade (.149), and sex (.100). For Question 2 (How useful for the work world was the writing instruction in freshman composition?), the English ACT score was the best predictor (.227), followed by the journalism grade (.212). For

Question 3 (How useful in your other academic writing was the writing instruction received in freshman composition), the journalism grade was the best predictor (.257), followed by sex (.149). For Question 4 (How useful for journalism writing was the writing instruction received in freshman composition), the English ACT scores was the best predictor (.279), followed by the composition grade (.161).

English ACT score was the best predictor for the student's composition grade at SMSU (.281), followed by sex (.239), while composite ACT score was the best predictor for the journalism grade (.484), followed by English ACT score (.284), and sex (.247).

Composition grade was a better predictor at SDSU than at SMSU. The student's journalism grade (.375) was the best predictor for Question 1, followed by composition grade (.243), composite ACT (.110), and sex (.109>. Though no variable was a good predictor for Question 2, major was the best one (.097), followed by journalism grade (.095). For question 3, composition grade was the best predictor (.498), followed by sex (.210). For question 4, composition grade was again the best predictor (.418), again followed by sex (.207). Other good predictors were composite ACT (.183), journalism grade (.158), and major (.133).

Composite ACT (.583) was the best predictor for the student's composition grade at SDSU, followed by the student's journalism grade (.339). Other good predictors were English ACT (.272), sex (.246), and major (.178). English ACT (.566) was the best

predictor for the journalism grade, followed by composite ACT (.433), sex (.425), and composition grade (.339).

Overall for both institutions, only composition grade (.186) was a good predictor for Question 1, and English ACT (.118) was the only good predictor for Question 2. Composition grade (.163) was the best predictor for Question 3, followed closely by journalism grade (.156), while English ACT (.138) was the only good predictor for Question 4.

The composite ACT (.320) was the best predictor of the composition grade, followed by English ACT (.270), journalism grade (.132), and major (.123). The composite ACT (.461) was best predictor of the journalism grade, followed by the English ACT (.407), sex (.371), composition grade (.132), and major (.111).

Discussion

The apparent answer to the first research question ("Do journalism students perceive that freshman composition provides a good foundation for them in other courses and in the work world?") is "no." First, students didn't see the course as particularly useful. Only 45.5 percent of journalism students who had recently completed the introductory journalism writing course noted that the writing instruction in freshman composition had "quite a bit" or "very much" value, only 29.9 percent thought freshman composition would be very useful for the work world, only 46.7 percent found it very useful for other academic writing, and 23.4 percent found it very useful for journalistic writing. Thus, the first hypothesis--that journalism students would report that

freshman composition would not be useful overall, for the work world, for other academic writing, or for journalistic writing--was supported and the null hypothesis was rejected.

The second research question was "Do freshman composition and journalism emphasize the same writing skills?" The answer was "no," they emphasis different skills. The second hypothesis--that journalism students would report that the introductory journalism writing course teaches practical skills and that freshman composition teaches reflective skills--was supported and the results favored rejection of the null hypothesis. Students thought that journalism was better than freshman composition in teaching them to write using what were defined as the practical skills--concisely, precisely, clearly, in an organized manner, using correct grammar, using correct spelling, and writing for one's audience. However, it also appeared to stress skills that freshman composition was expected to emphasize more: writing interestingly and in detail. Journalism students overall were more likely to think that composition taught them only to write creatively and using their own opinions. Pearson r correlations supported that finding. While students at both institutions were similar in rating the extent to which composition course and their journalism course treated the 11 writing skills analyzed, their responses indicated that composition and journalism courses stressed different writing skills.

The third research question was: "What factors best predict a student's success in introductory journalism classes?" The answer

is that English ACT score, composite ACT score, and sex were the better predictors of the variables studied.

The third hypothesis was that freshman composition grades would be a better predictor of success in the introductory journalism course than sex, major, English ACT score, composite ACT score, and previous grammar and spelling instruction. The findings supported the null hypothesis. Composition grade was a good predictor for other dependent variables, however. It was the best predictor for whether students valued the writing instruction they got in composition and for whether students found composition useful in other academic writing. It was not a good predictor for whether students found composition useful in the work world or whether they found the course useful for journalistic writing. A high composition grade meant students were more likely to get a high journalism grade at South Dakota State, but not at Southwest Missouri. Previous instruction was a good predictor only for journalism grade.

The fourth research question was: "Is there a difference in journalism students' perceptions based upon educational institution? The answer was a qualified "yes." The fourth hypothesis was that differences in how students perceive freshman composition and journalistic writing would be found based upon educational institution. The hypothesis was supported, but the null hypothesis could not be rejected.

A number of differences in responses were seen based upon institution, suggesting particularly that the composition programs

are somewhat different in their stress of grammar and spelling and that the institutions attract a somewhat different type of student in their journalism classes. However, similar means for the 11 writing skills suggested that the writing part of the content of the freshman composition course and introductory journalism course at the two institutions were similar in a number of ways.

The results were not often statistically significant because of the small sample size. The high number of V scores over 0.100, however, indicate that a number of statistically significant relationships would be expected with a larger sample size, and suggest areas for future research. There is a need to study journalism students at other institutions and to survey students in other types of professional writing programs concerning their attitudes about composition.

The results indicated that freshman composition was not seen as a good preparation for journalism students. It should be noted here, however, that freshman composition, especially the first course, is certainly not without value. Freshman composition does fulfill a role of "strainer," to catch students with extremely weak writing and grammar skills. In addition, journalism students need to be able to step out of the journalistic writing style on occasion and write longer, more developed paragraphs when the content calls for such writing.

If they are not comfortable with using freshman composition grades as a means for admitting students into the program, journalism schools can do their own straining by administering

their own tests. Journalism schools could attempt to press English programs to modify their composition program, which would not likely lead to much success without broad support on campus, or they could offer their own fundamentals of writing course, as is being done by some foreign language programs--either as a option to the second freshman composition course or as an addition to it. It appears clear, however, that journalism schools--and possibly other writing programs that prepare students to write for the professions, such as technical writing--should consider their options for strengthening the foundation for their students in the hopes that graduates will more likely be ready to pursue a writing career in the professions.

Table 1

Whether the Value of Freshman Comp Writing Instruction Was High ('Quite a Bit' or 'Very Much' Responses), Controlling for Institution

	Low	High
SMSU	55.6	44.4
SDSU	53.1	46.9
TOTAL	54.5	45.5

Chi square = .045, df = 1, not significant, V = .024.

	A in comp	Other grade	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	52.4	37.5	1.00	-	.149
SDSU	61.5	36.8	1.89	-	.243
TOTAL	55.9	37.2	2.67	-	.186

	Print major	Other major	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	-	45.2	-	-	-
SDSU	57.1	44.0	0.38	-	.109
TOTAL	50.0*	44.8	0.10	-	.035

	Male	Female	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	40.0	50.0	.450	-	.100
SDSU	50.0	41.7	.209	-	.081
TOTAL	44.4	46.9	.045	-	.024

Table 1 (Continued)

Whether the Value of Freshman Comp Writing Instruction Was High ('Quite a Bit' or 'Very Much' Responses), Controlling for Institution

	22 & under English ACT	23 & over English ACT	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	54.5	35.3	1.433	-	.191
SDSU	40.0	46.7	.136	-	.067
TOTAL	48.6	40.6	.447	-	.080

	22 & under Composite ACT	23 & over Composite ACT	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	44.0	50.0	.132	-	.058
SDSU	38.9	50.0	.362	-	.110
TOTAL	41.9	50.0	.434	-	.079

	A in Jrn.	Other grade	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	31.3	53.8	2.04	-	.220
SDSU	72.7	33.3	4.50	.05	.375
TOTAL	48.1	44.7	0.08	-	.033

*Includes SMSU students declaring print journalism major

Table 2

Whether the Benefit of English Comp Writing Instruction for the Work World Was High ('Quite a Bit' or 'Very Much' Responses), Controlling for Institution

	Low	High
SMSU	64.4	35.6
SDSU	78.1	21.9
TOTAL	70.1	29.9

Chi square = 1.67, df = 1, not significant, V = .147.

	A in comp	Other grade	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	33.3	37.5	0.09	-	.043
SDSU	23.1	21.1	0.02	-	.024
TOTAL	29.4	30.2	0.01	-	.009

	Print major	Other major	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	-	35.7	-	-	-
SDSU	14.3	24.0	0.30	-	.097
TOTAL	20.0*	31.3	0.53	-	.083

	Male	Female	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	36.0	35.0	0.01	-	.010
SDSU	20.0	25.0	0.11	-	.059
TOTAL	28.9	31.3	0.50	-	.025

Table 2 (Continued)

Whether the Benefit of English Comp Writing Instruction for the Work World Was High ('Quite a Bit' or 'Very Much' Responses), Controlling for Institution

	22 & under English ACT	23 & over English ACT	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	45.5	23.5	2.00	-	.227
SDSU	13.3	20.0	0.24	-	.089
TOTAL	32.4	21.9	0.96	-	.118

	22 & under Composite ACT	23 & over Composite ACT	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	36.0	35.7	0.00	-	.003
SDSU	16.7	16.7	0.00	-	.000
TOTAL	27.9	26.9	0.01	-	.011

	A in Jrn.	Other grade	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	25.0	46.2	1.87	-	.212
SDSU	27.3	19.0	0.29	-	.095
TOTAL	25.9	34.0	0.53	-	.084

*Includes SMSU students declaring print journalism major

Table 3

Whether the Utility of Freshman Comp Writing Instruction for Other Academic Writing Was High ('Quite a Bit' or 'Very Much' Responses), Controlling for Institution

	Low	High
SMSU	53.3	46.7
SDSU	53.1	46.9
TOTAL	53.2	46.8

Chi square = .000, df = 1, not significant, V = .002.

	A in comp	Other grade	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	42.9	50.0	0.23	-	.071
SDSU	76.9	26.3	7.94	.01	.498
TOTAL	55.9	39.5	2.03	-	.163

	Print major	Other major	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	-	47.6	-	-	-
SDSU	42.0	48.0	0.06	-	.043
TOTAL	40.0*	47.8	0.21	-	.052

	Male	Female	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	40.0	55.0	1.00	-	.149
SDSU	55.0	33.0	1.41	-	.210
TOTAL	46.7	46.9	0.00	-	.002

Table 3 (Continued)

Whether the Utility of Freshman Comp Writing Instruction for Other Academic Writing Was High ('Quite a Bit' or 'Very Much' Responses), Controlling for Institution

	22 & under English ACT	23 & over English ACT	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	50.0	47.1	0.03	-	.029
SDSU	46.7	46.7	0.00	-	.000
TOTAL	48.6	46.9	0.02	-	.018

	22 & under Composite ACT	23 & over Composite ACT	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	48.0	50.0	0.01	-	.019
SDSU	44.4	50.0	0.89	-	.055
TOTAL	46.5	50.0	0.08	-	.033

	A in Jrn.	Other grade	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	31.3	57.7	2.78	-	.257
SDSU	45.5	47.6	0.01	-	.021
TOTAL	37.0	53.2	1.80	-	.156

Table 4

Whether the Utility of Freshman Comp Writing Instruction for Journalistic Writing Was High ('Quite a Bit' or 'Very Much' Responses), Controlling for Institution

	Low	High
SMSU	73.3	26.7
SDSU	81.3	18.8
TOTAL	76.6	23.4

Chi square = .654, df = 1, not significant, V = .092.

	A in comp	Other grade	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	19.0	33.3	1.17	-	.161
SDSU	38.5	5.3	5.58	.05	.418
TOTAL	26.5	20.9	0.32	-	.065

	Print major	Other major	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	-	28.6	-	-	-
SDSU	28.6	16.0	0.57	-	.133
TOTAL	20.0*	23.9	0.07	-	.031

	Male	Female	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	28.0	25.0	0.05	-	.034
SDSU	25.0	8.3	1.37	-	.207
TOTAL	26.7	18.8	0.65	-	.092

Table 4 (Continued)

Whether the Utility of Freshman Comp Writing Instruction for Journalistic Writing Was High ('Quite a Bit' or 'Very Much' Responses), Controlling for Institution

	22 & under English ACT	23 & over English ACT	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	36.4	11.8	3.04	-	.279
SDSU	13.3	20.0	0.24	-	.089
TOTAL	27.0	15.6	1.31	-	.138

	22 & under Composite ACT	23 & over Composite ACT	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	28.0	21.4	0.20	-	.072
SDSU	11.0	25.0	1.00	-	.183
TOTAL	20.9	23.1	0.04	-	.025

	A in Jrn.	Other grade	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU	25.0	30.8	0.16	-	.062
SDSU	27.3	14.3	0.80	-	.158
TOTAL	25.9	23.4	0.06	-	.028

*Includes SMSU students declaring print journalism major

Table 5

Whether Receiving an A in Introductory Journalistic Writing Correlated with Other Independent Variables, Controlling for Institution

	A in Comp	Other Grade	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU Jrn A	36.8	39.1	0.02	-	.023
SDSU Jrn A	53.8	21.1	3.68	-	.339
TOTAL	43.2	31.0	1.28	-	.132

	Print major	Other major	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU Jrn A	-	35.9	-	-	-
SDSU Jrn A	42.9	32.0	0.29	-	.095
TOTAL	50.0*	34.4	0.91	-	.111

	Male	Female	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU Jrn A	48.0	23.5	2.57	-	.247
SDSU Jrn A	50.0	8.3	5.77	.05	.425
TOTAL	48.9	17.2	7.62	.01	.321

	22 & under		23 & over				
	English	ACT	English	ACT	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU Jrn A	22.7		50.0		3.06	-	.284
SDSU Jrn A	6.7		60.0		9.60	.01	.566
TOTAL	16.2		54.8		11.24	.001	.407

Table 5 (Continued)

Whether Receiving an A in Introductory Journalistic Writing Correlated with Other Independent Variables, Controlling for Institution

	22 & under Composite ACT	23 & over Composite ACT	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU Jrn A	16.7	64.3	8.91	.01	.484
SDSU Jrn A	16.7	58.3	5.63	.05	.433
TOTAL	16.7	61.5	14.45	.001	.461

*Includes SMSU students declaring print journalism major

Table 6

Whether Receiving an A in Freshman Composition Correlated with Other Independent Variables, Controlling for Institution

	Print major	Other major	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU Comp A	-	45.2	-	-	-
SDSU Comp A	57.1	36.0	1.01	-	.178
TOTAL	60.0*	41.8	1.17	-	.123

	Male	Female	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU Comps A	36.0	60.0	2.57	-	.239
SDSU Comp A	50.0	25.0	1.94	-	.246
TOTAL	42.2	46.9	0.16	-	.046

	22 & under English ACT	23 & over English ACT	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU Comp A	36.4	64.7	3.08	-	.281
SDSU Comp A	26.7	53.3	2.22	-	.272
TOTAL	32.4	59.4	5.03	.05	.270

	22 & under Composite ACT	23 & over Composite ACT	Chi square	Sig.	V
SMSU Comp A	44.0	57.1	0.62	-	.126
SDSU Comp A	16.7	75.0	10.21	.01	.583
TOTAL	32.6	65.4	7.06	.01	.320

*Includes SMSU students declaring print journalism major

Table 7

Rankings by Institution of Means of Journalism Students' Ratings of How Well Freshman Composition and Journalism Writing Instruction Addressed 11 Writing Concepts.

	SMSU				SDSU			
Concept	Comp Mean	Rank	Jrn Mean	Rank	Comp Mean	Rank	Jrn Mean	Rank
concisely	2.90	11	4.20	5	2.94	11	3.84	7
precisely	3.07	10	4.20	5	3.28	10	4.03	6
clearly	3.40	8	4.32	3	3.50	9	4.09	3.5
organized	3.71	2.5	4.37	2	3.63	5.5	4.06	5
grammar	3.38	9	4.15	7	3.88	1	4.13	2
spelling	3.48	7	4.41	1	3.84	2.5	4.09	3.5
audience	3.62	4.5	4.20	5	3.63	5.5	4.28	1
interestingly	3.71	2.5	3.93	9	3.78	4	3.63	9
creatively	4.02	1	3.61	11	3.59	7	3.06	10
in detail	3.62	4.5	3.98	8	3.84	2.5	3.69	8
opinions	3.50	6	2.78	10	3.56	8	2.47	11

Note: SMSU comp/jrn, Pearson r = -.266 (not significant at .05 level of confidence), Spearman rho = -.351 (not significant at .05 level); SDSU comp/jrn, r = .035 (not significant), rho = .282 (not significant); SMSU comp/SDSU comp, r = .668 (significant at .05 level), rho = .357 (not significant); SMSU jrn/SDSU jrn, r = .955 (significant at .001 level), rho = .712 (significant at .05 level); overall comp/jrn, r = -.189 (not significant), rho = -.070 (not significant).

Table 8

Differences Between SMSU and SDSU Composition and Journalism Means for 11 Writing Concepts

	SMSU		SDSU		Overall	
	jrn/comp	Rank	jrn/comp	Rank	jrn/comp	Rank
concisely	+1.30	1	+0.90	2	+1.12	1
precisely	+1.13	2	+0.75	3	+0.96	2
clearly	+0.92	4	+0.59	5	+0.77	4
organized	+0.66	7	+0.43	7	+0.55	7.5
grammar	+0.77	5	+0.25	8.5	+0.55	7.5
spelling	+0.93	3	+0.25	8.5	+0.63	5
audience	+0.58	8	+0.65	4	+0.61	6
interestingly	+0.22	11	-0.15	10.5	+0.05	11
creatively	-0.41	9	-0.53	6	-0.47	9
in detail	+0.36	10	-0.15	10.5	+0.13	10
opinions	-0.72	6	-1.09	1	-0.89	3

Note: + Indicates journalism mean is higher than composition; - indicates journalism mean is lower than composition.

Table 9

Differences Between SMSU and SDSU Composition Means and for SMSU and SDSU Journalism Means for 11 Writing Concepts

	SMSU comp/ SDSU comp	Rank	SMSU jrn/ SDSU jrn	Rank	Dif.	Rank
concisely	+0.04	10	-0.36	2	0.40	4
precisely	+0.21	5	-0.17	9	0.38	5
clearly	+0.10	6	-0.23	8	0.33	8
organized	-0.08	7	-0.31	4.5	0.23	9
grammar	+0.50	1	-0.02	11	0.52	2
spelling	+0.36	3	-0.32	3	0.68	1
audience	+0.01	11	+0.08	10	0.07	11
interestingly	+0.07	8	-0.30	6	0.37	6.5
creatively	-0.43	2	-0.55	1	0.12	10
in detail	+0.22	4	-0.29	7	0.51	3
opinions	+0.06	9	-0.31	4.5	0.37	6.5

Note: + Indicates SDSU mean is higher than SMSU mean;
- indicates SDSU mean is lower than SMSU mean.

Table 10

Comparing responses for key survey questions

#1: How valuable was the writing instruction you received in your first freshman English composition course?

	"Quite a bit" or "very much"	Mean	Standard deviation
SMSU	44.5%	3.42	1.02
SDSU	46.9%	3.31	1.07
TOTAL	45.5	3.38	1.04

#2: How useful for the work world was the writing instruction you received in your first freshman composition course?

	"Quite a bit" or "very much"	Mean	Standard deviation
SMSU	35.6%	3.02	1.02
SDSU	21.9%	2.94	0.93
TOTAL	29.9%	2.99	0.99

#3: How useful for your other academic writing (other than journalism) was the writing instruction you received in your first freshman composition course?

	"Quite a bit" or "very much"	Mean	Standard deviation
SMSU	46.7%	3.29	1.05
SDSU	46.9%	3.31	0.98
TOTAL	46.8%	3.30	1.02

Table 10 (Continued)

Comparing responses for key survey questions

#4. How useful for your journalistic writing was the writing instruction you received in your first freshman composition course?

	"Quite a bit" or "very much"	Mean	Standard deviation
SMSU	26.7%	2.64	1.01
SDSU	18.8%	2.75	0.97
TOTAL	23.4%	2.69	1.00

#5. How much grammar instruction did you receive in your first freshman composition course?

	"Quite a bit" or "very much"	Mean	Standard deviation
SMSU	17.8%	2.56	0.98
SDSU	21.9%	2.81	1.10
TOTAL	19.5%	2.67	1.04

#6. How much grammar instruction did you receive in your high school English classes (10th through 12th grades)?

	"Quite a bit" or "very much"	Mean	Standard deviation
SMSU	64.4%	3.80	1.05
SDSU	65.6%	4.00	0.90
TOTAL	64.9%	3.88	0.99

Table 10 (Continued)

Comparing responses for key survey questions

#7. How strict was the English instructor in your first freshman composition course in grading your writing for grammar mistakes?

	"Quite a bit" or "very much"	Mean	Standard deviation
SMSU	46.7%	3.29	1.05
SDSU	46.9%	3.31	0.98
TOTAL	46.8%	3.30	1.02

#8. How strict was the English instructor in your first freshman composition course in grading your writing for spelling mistakes?

	"Quite a bit" or "very much"	Mean	Standard deviation
SMSU	62.2%	3.67	1.07
SDSU	65.6%	3.81	0.92
TOTAL	64.6%	3.73	1.01

#9. How well did you like your first freshman composition course?

	"Quite a bit" or "very much"	Mean	Standard deviation
SMSU	62.2%	3.73	1.25
SDSU	46.9%	3.41	1.17
TOTAL	55.8%	3.60	1.23

Table 10 (Continued)

Comparing responses for key survey questions

#10. How well did you like the writing portions of your introductory journalism writing courses?

	"Quite a bit" or "very much"	Mean	Standard deviation
SMSU	70.5%	3.95	0.80
SDSU	40.6%	3.47	0.71
TOTAL	57.9%	3.75	0.80

#11. What do you think of the amount of time devoted to writing in your freshman composition course as compared to time devoted to literature?

	"Not enough"	Mean	Standard deviation
SMSU	20.0%	2.98	0.95
SDSU	31.3%	2.84	0.91
TOTAL	24.7%	2.92	0.94

#12. What do you think of the amount of time devoted to writing in your introductory journalism writing course as compared to time spent on non-writing topics.

	"Not enough"	Mean	Standard deviation
SMSU	11.4%	3.07	0.58
SDSU	12.5%	2.91	0.52
TOTAL	11.9%	3.00	0.56

Table 11

Comparison of Cramer's V scores for variables, by institution

Southwest Missouri State University

	Comp Grade	Major	Sex	Eng ACT	Comp ACT	Jrn Grade
#1	.149	-	.100	.191	.058	.220
#2	.043	-	.010	.227	.003	.212
#3	.071	-	.149	.029	.019	.257
#4	.161	-	.034	.279	.072	.062
#5	-	-	.239	.281	.126	.023
#6	.023	-	.247	.284	.484*	-

South Dakota State University

	Comp Grade	Major	Sex	Eng ACT	Comp ACT	Jrn Grade
#1	.243	.109	.081	.067	.110	.375*
#2	.024	.097	.059	.089	.000	.095
#3	.498*	.043	.210	.000	.055	.021
#4	.418*	.133	.207	.089	.183	.158
#5	-	.178	.246	.272	.583*	.339
#6	.339	.094	.425	.566*	.433*	-

Table 11 (Continued)

Comparison of Cramer's V scores for variables, by institution

	Overall					
	Comp Grade	Major	Sex	Eng ACT	Comp ACT	Jrn Grade
#1	.186	.035	.024	.080	.079	.033
#2	.009	.083	.025	.118	.011	.084
#3	.163	.052	.002	.018	.033	.156
#4	.065	.031	.092	.138	.025	.028
#5	-	.123	.046	.270*	.320*	.132
#6	.132	.111	.321*	.407*	.461*	-

(Note: #1-How valuable was freshman comp? #2-How useful for the work world was freshman comp? #3-How useful for other academic writing was freshman comp?; #4-How useful for journalistic writing was freshman comp?; #5-Student's composition grade; #6-Student's introductory journalism grade.

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